

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application, as amended, and consideration of the following remarks. Claims 1, 7, 9-14, 17 and 18 have been amended. Claims 15 and 24 have been canceled. Claim 25 has been added. Claims 1-14, 16-23 and 25 remain pending. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b). Claims 4, 6, 9, 10-14, 17, and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Amendments

Amendments to the Claims

Applicant has amended the claims to more particularly point out what Applicant regards as the invention. New claim 25 is supported by the specification and claims as originally filed. No new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

Rejections

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 18, 19, 23 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the Mashinsky reference (US Pat. 5,694,464). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as stated in more detail below.

The Mashinsky reference discloses a computerized switching system for connecting a call from a caller and a called party or target by a manual or automated dialer by informing a control station of a PIN or ID number and optionally the service type, and having the call routed based on pre-programmed numbers provided by the called party. The call is routed to a destination that may be based on many factors, including the hour of day, priority of call, service type, destination and origination of caller and other programmed commands. The called party has the ability to administer the routings and direct all call flows, including destination, scanning originator, time, etc. A dialer service pre-programmed with access and PIN numbers may be used to automate these procedures.

As to claims 1, 18 and 25, the Mashinsky reference does not disclose each and every element of the claimed invention. Specifically, the Mashinsky reference does not disclose that ***before an agent is notified of a product support request*** received from a customer, the support entitlement level is determined by receiving the product support request and a technical support identification (TSID) from the customer. Validating and classifying the TSID into at least one of several classifications. The classifications can include a contract classification. One of several support levels is assigned to the classified TSID. The assigned support level corresponds to the TSID classification and the delivery of the assigned support level is enabled including providing complimentary product support if the TSID is not valid.

The Mashinsky reference discloses connecting a telephone call from a caller to a called party. Mashinsky's "telephone call" is not the same as Applicant's ***product support request***. As described in the specification a product support request can be a request of technical support or a registration of the product or any one of many different exchanges of information.

Further, Applicant's ***product support request*** relates to a product manufactured by the receiving party. Mashinsky's "telephone calls" are processed, routed, recorded and directed to the ultimate service provider. Applicant's ***product support request*** relates to a product manufactured by the receiving party and relates to product support for that product.

Further, Applicant's ***product support request*** is not automatically terminated or otherwise ended without further processing if the TSID received from the calling party is not valid. Mashinsky's "telephone calls" are routed, recorded and directed to the ultimate service provider for ultimate determination. Mashinsky provides no provision for connecting a telephone caller that lacks a correct or valid access # and pin #. Mashinsky teaches that if either of the access # of the pin # are incorrect or invalid the telephone call will not and cannot even be connected.

In stark contrast, the Applicant's invention ***does not preclude*** that Applicant's ***product support requests*** will be "connected" (i.e., received) but rather only that the "TSID is received, validated, classified and the support level assigned ***before*** an agent

is *notified* of the product support request” (emphasis added) and not that the call is precluded or blocked or not allowed. Specifically, Applicant’s provides that even product support requests *without* a valid TSID may still be connected and recorded (see claims 10-13 re reporting illicit TSIDs) and also still receive some level of complimentary support as described in the specification.

Further, the Applicant’s invention also provides the opportunity for complimentary support to be provided in addition to the support identified by the classification of the valid TSID.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant’s invention as claimed in claims 1, 18 and 25 is not anticipated nor even suggested by the Mashinsky reference, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Further, claims 2-3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 19 and 23 depend from one of claims 1 and 18 and are patentably distinct over the Mashinsky reference for at least the same reasons set forth for claims 1 and 18. Applicant therefore submits that Applicant’s invention as claimed in claims 2-3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 19 and 23 is not anticipated by the Mashinsky reference, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Specifically with regard to claim 15, now claim 1, as the limitations of the previous claim 15 have been included into claim 1, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s assertion that the Mashinsky reference “inherently enabling delivery of the assigned support level”. The cited portions of the Mashinsky reference provides:

“The control station 30, upon receiving a call with a PIN or ID number signifying that a technical service call has been made *to a subscribing company*, can check its memory bank 32 to see if a given customer has already duplicated the allotted free time.” (Col 7, Ln 23-27)

“For a “call home” service, for example, the system disconnects, at SS3, at which time the system checks the data base to determine the target user or group of users associated with the code entered in memory, and notifies the targets of the call of their need to call the system. The system will try again and again until the targets dial the access number and code ratification by an outdial telepager or other available services. At S4, the system dials the caller while the recipient or target waits to be connected to the system and, once the parties re connected, lets the parties talk for a pre-determined period of time based on the billing arrangement. This way,

a party that would like to be reached at any time can simply dial 28 and enter an ID and service type and all callers trying to reach that party will be automatically routed to that ANI number if they or their ANI number fits the service type stored in the data base 32.” (Col 7, Ln 50-65, emphasis added)

Applicant respectfully submits that nothing in the cited portions of the Mashinsky reference describes or even suggests “delivery of the assigned support level” and therefore the Mashinsky reference does teach inherently or even directly “enabling delivery of the assigned support level.” Nor does Mashinsky teach or suggest that the product support request is received by the provider of the service, but rather that the request is processed according to Mashinsky and then forwarded to the “*subscribing company*” for completion of the call.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant’s invention as claimed in claim 15 is not anticipated by the Mashinsky reference, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 4, 6, 9, 10-14, 17, and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Mashinsky reference in view of the Lawrence reference (US Pat. 5,430,866). Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Mashinsky reference in view of the Hughes reference (US Pat. 4,535,204). Claims 9 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Mashinsky reference. Claims 10-14 and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Mashinsky reference in view of the Thompson reference (US Pub 2003/0061104). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections as set forth in more detail below.

The Lawrence reference discloses a data processing system having a pair of mirrored storage units maintains a state record of the mirrored pair in system memory. In order to be able to determine state when the system is re-initialized, this state information is also stored on each storage unit of the mirrored pair, and in an alternate location. When the state changes, the operating system writes the new state to those

storage units which are still functioning, and to the alternate location. In order to prevent ambiguous situations, only certain defined state transitions are permitted. When the system is re-initialized, it attempts to read the state information stored on the storage units. If either unit can not be read, the system substitutes the state retrieved from the alternate state record for the state that would have been read from the non-responding unit. This pair of states from the two units index an unique entry in a state derivation table containing the resultant state.

The Hughes reference discloses a telephone dialing system uses a hand-held wand to read telephone numbers represented in bar-code form. The coded numbers are converted to electrical signals, stored and then dialed out in impulse or tone signaling form. A microprocessor implementation and its routines are described. The coded representation may be a 2-out-of-5 code or preferably a hexadecimal code provided by four bars. The hexadecimal allows the provision of characters in addition to numerals 0-9 and enables instructions and other control functions to be entered into and acted upon by the microprocessor. The telephone numbers can be provided on documents such as letterheads or directories. The instruction and control facilities can be generated from labels formed on a pad and containing the hexadecimal codes.

The Thompson reference discloses a warranty support for purchased products is provided by an electronic warranty administrator that maintains a plurality of databases. A first database identifies customers, either individuals or corporate entities having warranted products. A second database identifies the manufacturers of those products. The warranty administrator coordinates between the customer, the manufacturer and a service provider to provide warranty repairs. Unlike conventional extended warranties offered by third parties, the manufacturer remains in the repair process and thereby gains valuable information about the long term satisfaction of the customers. The warranty administrator also provides the manufacturer with a means to contact the customer about other products, product recalls and affinity programs thereby promoting brand loyalty.

As to claim 4 and as stated above the Mashinsky reference does not disclose nor even suggest Applicant's invention as claimed in claim 4. The Lawrence reference does not cure the failures of the Mashinsky reference neither does the

combination of the Mashinsky reference and the Lawrence reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's invention as claimed in claim 4 is not rendered obvious by either of the Mashinsky reference or the Lawrence reference, whether considered alone or in any combination, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

As to claim 6 and as stated above the Mashinsky reference does not disclose nor even suggest Applicant's invention as claimed in claim 6. The Hughes reference does not cure the failures of the Mashinsky reference neither does the combination of the Mashinsky reference and the Hughes reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's invention as claimed in claim 6 is not rendered obvious by either of the Mashinsky reference or the Hughes reference, whether considered alone or in any combination, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

As to claims 9 and 17 and as stated above the Mashinsky reference does not disclose nor even suggest Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 9 or 17. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 9 and 17 is not rendered obvious by the Mashinsky reference and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

As to claims 10-14 and 20-22 and as stated above the Mashinsky reference does not disclose nor even suggest Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 10-14 and 20-22. The Thompson reference does not cure the failures of the Mashinsky reference neither does the combination of the Mashinsky reference and the Thompson reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's invention as claimed in claim 6 is not rendered obvious by either of the Mashinsky reference or the Thompson reference, whether considered alone or in any combination, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

With respect to claim 25, Applicant submits that claim 25 is patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons set forth above for claims 1-14 and 16-23. Further Applicant submits that none of the cited references, whether considered alone or in any combination teach or even suggest each and every

limitation as provided in claim 25. Specifically, a method of determining a support entitlement level comprising receiving a product support request from a customer. The product support request being received in an automated call distributor (ACD). The product support request being received from an interactive web site coupled to the ACD via an Internet connection. Wherein the product support request relates to a product manufactured by a receiving party and wherein the product is in data communication with the interactive web site. A technical support identification (TSID) is received from the customer. The TSID is stored within the product and receiving the TSID includes automatically retrieving the TSID from the product and automatically retrieving at least one of a plurality of additional details for the product. The TSID is validated and classified. The valid TSID is classifying into at least one of a plurality of classifications in accordance with the retrieved at least one of the plurality of additional details for the product. At least one of a plurality of support levels are assigned to the classified, valid TSID. The assigned support level corresponds to the TSID classification. The TSID is received, validated, classified and the support level assigned before an agent is notified of the product support request. Delivery of the assigned support level is enabled including providing complimentary product support if the TSID is not valid. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 25 is patentably distinct over the cited references.

SUMMARY

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

If the Examiner determines the prompt allowance of these claims could be facilitated by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact George B. Leavell at (408) 749-6900, ext 6923.

Deposit Account Authorization

Authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Ref ADAPP227) for any charges that may be due or credit our account for any overpayment. Furthermore, if an extension is required, then Applicant hereby requests such extension.

Respectfully submitted,

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